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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [OPRC](#) [EUN](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [SOCI](#) [EI](#)
SUBJECT: GAERC: IRELAND STILL AVERSE TO BELARUS SANCTIONS
AND BILATERAL APPROACH TO IRAN

REF: A. STATE 53022

[1](#)B. STATE 54484
[1](#)C. STATE 54506
[1](#)D. DUBLIN 362

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Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Mary E. Daly; Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: On April 6, Post delivered reftels' demarche points to Jim Kelly, Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) EU Correspondent. Kelly noted Ireland's support for the April 10 GAERC's likely approval of an expanded visa ban against Belarusian officials culpable in the fraudulent March 19 elections, including Lukashenka. He observed that Ireland was not prepared to approach Iran bilaterally on the nuclear issue, as the GOI was satisfied with the EU-3's diplomacy on behalf of Member States. Kelly also cited the GOI's interest in broadening EU dialogue with Iran to include discussion on human rights, which would cover infringements on the practice of the Baha'i faith. Regarding EU discussion on aid to Palestine, the GOI saw the need for technical consultations on possibilities for aid disbursements that would prevent human suffering while bypassing the Palestinian Authority government. In reply to USG points on the UN rapporteurs report on Guantanamo, Kelly reiterated Foreign Minister Ahern's view that the detainees should be released or charged and that the USG should close the facility. End summary.

Belarus

[1](#)2. (C) Ireland supports the April 10 GAERC's plans to approve an expanded visa ban against Belarusian officials who were culpable in the fraudulent March 19 elections, including Lukashenka, said Kelly. He noted that GAERC ministers likely would not have serious discussion on financial sanctions against Belarus, and he added that EU Member States remained divided on this option. The Irish Government believed that financial sanctions now would be ill-timed, given the urgency of strengthening Belarusian civil society and the risk that sanctions would hurt the Belarusian people.

Iran

[1](#)3. (C) Kelly said that the GAERC conclusions would strongly support the March 29 UNSC Presidential Statement on Iran and would call on Tehran to desist enrichment activities, return to negotiations, and comply with its international obligations. The GAERC discussions, he added, would focus on the need for the EU to be ready if, in four-six weeks, Iran

had not yet fallen in line with UNSC requirements. He observed that Ireland was not prepared to approach Iran bilaterally at this point, as the Irish Government was satisfied with the EU-3's diplomacy on behalf of Member States. He also cautioned against overestimating Ireland's leverage with Iran, especially as the Iranian mission in Dublin had been without an ambassador since 2005. (Comment: Notwithstanding Kelly's comments, Ireland has an Embassy in Tehran and would be able to make a bilateral approach if the GOI wanted. The newly nominated Irish Ambassador to Iran, John Deady, currently DFA Director for UN Affairs, is due in Tehran in August.)

¶4. (C) In reply to ref B points, Kelly said that Member States hope to broaden dialogue with Iran to include discussion on human rights, which would cover infringements on the practice of the Baha'i faith. He noted that groups of Ireland-based Iranian Baha'i had visited the DFA several times over the past year to discuss the Iranian Government's repressive treatment of their community and other religious minorities. The DFA had reassured the groups of the GOI's support for their case. Kelly said that the GAERC conclusions would urge Iranian authorities to protect Baha'i religious rights, but that the GOI would not issue a separate statement on the issue.

Middle East Peace Process

¶5. (C) The April 10 GAERC would not likely reach decisions on whether the EU should provide aid to the Palestinian Authority government, but would make clear that Hamas, failure to accept the three principles would have implications for aid, said Kelly. GAERC ministers, he observed, were focused on ways to avoid triggering a humanitarian crisis in the absence of aid. This issue would require technical discussions on possibilities for aid disbursements that would prevent human suffering while

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bypassing the PA government. He added that the DFA remained in regular contact with the PA Delegate General in Ireland, Dr. Hikmat Ajjuri, whose appointment in October 2005 pre-dated the Palestinian elections. (Comment: On April 7, Paul Gunning, DFA First Secretary for the Middle East, told Emboff that Ajjuri was virulently anti-Hamas and dismissive of PA Foreign Minister Al-Zahar. Gunning added, however, that there was no indication that Ajjuri would be replaced.)

Balkans

¶6. (C) Kelly said that the Balkans would not be on the April 10 GAERC agenda, having been heavily covered at the Gymnich several weeks ago. He mentioned, however, that the third round of Kosovo negotiations in Vienna on April 3 had not produced any significant progress, according to briefings given to Member States.

Ukraine

¶7. (C) The GAERC would issue positive conclusions on the conduct of Ukraine's March 26 parliamentary and local elections, which were in line with international norms, said Kelly. He observed that the Irish Government shared the USG's hope that reformist factions would lead in the coalition Ukrainian government to be formed. In any event, the EU was prepared to recognize and work with whatever government emerged.

Guantanamo

¶8. (C) In reply to ref C points on the UN rapporteurs report

on Guantanamo, Kelly said that the Irish Government and the USG had a straightforward difference of opinion on U.S. detention practices, which Prime Minister Bertie Ahern and Foreign Minister Dermot Ahern had noted during St. Patrick's Day discussions in Washington. Kelly cited Foreign Minister Ahern's April 4 comments to the Irish Parliament endorsing UNSYG Annan's view that those held in Guantanamo should either be charged or released and that the USG should close the facility. Kelly also committed to pass ref C points to DFA's human rights office, while noting that the terms of access offered to the UN rapporteurs may have been a factor in their decision not to visit Guantanamo. (Comment: Per ref D, Amnesty International held a public program on April 5 at the Dublin Film Institute for Shafiq Rasul and Rhuhel Ahmad, who were arrested in Afghanistan in 2001 and held for two years in Guantanamo. The event, which made front-page news, featured a showing of "The Road to Guantanamo," a film about their story, which also recently aired on Irish television.)

KENNY